

CLAIMS

1. A padlock having a body and a shackle having two ends, one end of the shackle being rotatably secured within the body, the other end of the shackle being releasable from the body when the padlock is unlocked; the padlock comprising:

5 a fingerprint scanning apparatus within said body and having a sensor accessible from the exterior of said body for scanning fingerprint indicia;

 a memory device within said body for storing data corresponding to fingerprint indicia of at least one individual authorized to unlock said padlock;

 means for comparing scanned fingerprint indicia with fingerprint indicia data stored in said memory device; and

10 means for releasing said other end of said shackle in response to said comparing means when said scanned fingerprint indicia matches said fingerprint data stored in said memory device.

2. The padlock recited in claim 1 wherein said releasing means comprises a solenoid.

3. The padlock recited in claim 2 wherein said solenoid is affixed to a locking pin and wherein said second end of said shackle comprises a recess for receiving said locking pin.

4. The padlock recited in claim 1 wherein said comparing means comprises a microprocessor.

5. The padlock recited in claim 1 further comprising an unlock activation button for activating said scanning apparatus for receiving fingerprint indicia to be compared with fingerprint indicia data stored in said memory device.

6. The padlock recited in claim 1 further comprising a programming activation button for activating said scanning apparatus for receiving fingerprint indicia to be stored in said memory device.

7. The padlock recited in claim 1 further comprising a reset switch for erasing said fingerprint indicia data stored in said memory device, when said padlock is unlocked.

8. The padlock recited in claim 1 wherein said shackle is spring loaded to unlock said padlock automatically when said other end is released.

9. A padlock comprising:

- a body;
- a shackle releasably secured to said body;
- an electrically-operated release mechanism contained in said body
- 5 for selectively releasing said shackle;
- a biometric sensor;
- a biometric data storage device; and
- a comparing device for comparing sensed biometric data with stored biometric data for activating said release mechanism when said sensed
- 10 biometric data matches said stored biometric data.

10. The padlock recited in claim 9 wherein said biometric sensor comprises a fingerprint scanner.

11. The padlock recited in claim 9 wherein said release mechanism comprises a solenoid.

12. The padlock recited in claim 9 wherein said comparing device comprises a microprocessor.